
FIRST CALIFORNIA STEM CELL RESEARCH GRANTS DRAW 232 PROPOSALS \$24 million available for 30 grants

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SAN FRANCISCO, October 16, 2006 – The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) announced today that it has received 232 applications for Scientific Excellence through Exploration and Development (SEED) Grants, the first stem cell research grants it will award since passage of Proposition 71 in November 2004. The applications are from individual researchers at 36 non-profit institutions in California.

SEED Grants are intended to bring new ideas and new investigators into the field of human embryonic stem cell research, and offer an opportunity for investigators to carry out studies that may yield preliminary data or proof-of-principle results that could then be extended to full scale investigations.

"The response demonstrates the keen interest in the field and the pent up demand for funding for human embryonic stem cell research in California," said Dr. Arlene Y. Chiu, CIRM's Director of Scientific Programs. "We're delighted that there is such strong competition for our inaugural research initiative, and that the applicants are considering such a broad range of approaches. It bodes well for the future of our program."

CIRM's governing board, the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC), authorized up to \$24 million to support as many as 30 SEED Grants over two years. The applications will be reviewed by a committee of scientific experts from outside California and patient advocates from the ICOC. The committee will evaluate the scientific merit of each proposal and make funding recommendations to the full ICOC, which has final authority to award CIRM grants. Grant recipients will be named at the ICOC's January meeting.

About CIRM

Governed by the ICOC, CIRM was established in 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was approved by California voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. For more information, please visit www.cirm.ca.gov.

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| Contact: | Dale A Carlson |
| | 415/396-9117 |

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